

KENYA: SWAHILI COAST

WITH DR STEPHANIE WYNNE - JONES



**FAR
HORIZONS**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL TRIPS



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THE SWAHILI COAST

with Dr. Stephanie Wynne - Jones



An Archaeological Odyssey

Embark on an extraordinary 16-day journey along the Swahili Coast, where the ebb and flow of trade winds have carried merchants, conquerors, and cultures for over a millennium. From the 8th century, when Arab and Persian traders first established settlements on the East African coast, to the arrival of Portuguese explorers in the 15th century, and through the era of Omani sultanates, this narrow coastline has been a crucible of cultural exchange. Our expedition will take you from the winding alleys of Lamu, a town that has remained largely unchanged since the 18th century, to the imposing ruins of Kilwa Kisiwani, once described by Ibn Battuta as "one of the most beautiful and well-constructed cities in the world."

The Swahili Coast's strategic location made it a vital link in the Indian Ocean trade network, connecting the African interior with Arabia, Persia, India, and China. Traders bringing gold from Zimbabwe, ivory from the Congo, and slaves from the continental interior flowed through Swahili ports, returning with porcelain, silk, and spices.

This commerce gave rise to a unique Swahili culture, a sophisticated blend of African and Asian influences reflected in everything from language and cuisine to architecture and art. Our journey will reveal this cultural tapestry, from the intricately carved doorways of Mombasa's Old Town to the haunting ruins of Gede, abandoned in the 17th century for reasons that remain a mystery.

As we traverse the coast from Kenya to Tanzania, we'll witness the enduring legacy of this remarkable civilization. We'll explore Lamu, where traditional dhows still ply the waters and donkeys remain the primary mode of transport. In Zanzibar, we'll wander through Stone Town's labyrinth of alleys, where the air is heavy with the scent of cloves, and the shadows of the slave trade still linger. Our journey culminates in Kilwa Kisiwani, the medieval powerhouse that once controlled much of the East African gold trade. Throughout our expedition, the expertise of Dr. Stephanie Wynne-Jones will bring to life the stories written in stone and sand, offering insights into ongoing archaeological discoveries that continue to reshape our understanding of this fascinating region.

Daily Itinerary



Day 1

Depart for Kenya

Depart on a flight bound for Nairobi, Kenya.

Day 2

Arrive in Nairobi

Arrive in Nairobi, Kenya's capital and largest city. Founded in 1899 as a rail depot on the Uganda Railway, Nairobi grew to become the capital of British East Africa in 1907. Today, it's a bustling metropolis that serves as the gateway to our Swahili Coast adventure. Enjoy a visit to the National Museum of Kenya before transferring to the Radisson Blu, Nairobi Upper Hill, our home for the night. Enjoy a welcome dinner with your fellow travel companions. (D)

Day 3

Flight to Lamu. Local Cooking Class

Morning flight to Lamu, an island that has been a significant Swahili settlement since the 14th century. Afternoon and lunch at leisure to settle in and get a first glimpse of this enchanting island, where donkeys remain the primary mode of transport. Join the Shela Women's Association for an enriching Samosa Making Class, where you'll delve into the art of crafting this traditional delicacy while exploring the cultural and historical significance behind each ingredient and technique. Dinner at the hotel. Overnight at The Majlis Resort, Lamu for three nights. (B/L/D)

Day 4

Excursion to Lamu Town. Takwa Ruins

Full day exploration of Lamu Town, a UNESCO World Heritage site. Wander through the narrow streets, visiting the Lamu Museum housed in a traditional Swahili townhouse. The museum showcases Swahili culture and the town's seafaring history. We'll also see the impressive Riyadhha Mosque, built in 1900, which has been a center for Islamic scholarship in East Africa.

In the afternoon, take a boat to Manda Island to visit the evocative ruins of Takwa, a 16th-century Swahili settlement abandoned in the 17th century due to lack of fresh water. (B/L/D)



Daily Itinerary *(cont'd)*

Day 5

Pate Island

Today we'll take a boat trip to Pate Island, home to some of the earliest and most important Swahili settlements. We'll visit the ruins of Shanga, where Chinese porcelain dated to 760 AD provides evidence of early Indian Ocean trade. We'll also explore the current town of Pate, once a rival to Lamu and Mombasa, where traditional Swahili culture is still very much alive. Dr. Wynne-Jones will discuss the archaeological evidence for the development of Swahili culture. (B/L/D)



Day 6

Flight to Mombasa

A morning flight takes us to Mombasa, first mentioned by name by the 12th-century Arab geographer Al Idrisi, and a major Swahili city-state before becoming a Portuguese stronghold in the 16th century. Transfer upon arrival to Watamu with the afternoon at leisure to enjoy the beautiful beach or relax by the pool at our hotel in Watamu. Overnight at Hemingways Watamu for two nights. (B/L/D)

Day 7

Gede Ruins. Malindi Town

Morning visit to the ruins of Gede, a mysterious abandoned city hidden in a lush coastal forest. This prosperous town, which flourished from the 13th to 17th centuries, was inexplicably deserted, leaving behind impressive ruins including a palace, mosques, and houses. In the afternoon, we'll explore Malindi Town, an important historical port that hosted Vasco da Gama in 1498, marking the beginning of Portuguese influence on the Swahili Coast. (B/L/D)

Day 8

Transfer to Mombasa

Return to Mombasa and enjoy an afternoon visit to Nguuni Nature Sanctuary, where we can observe giraffes, ostriches, and other wildlife against the backdrop of baobab trees. This sanctuary offers a glimpse into the diverse ecosystems that have shaped life on the Swahili Coast for millennia. Overnight at the Serena Beach Resort & Spa, Mombasa for two nights. (B/L/D)

Day 9

Fort Jesus. Jumba la Mtwana. Tour Old Town

Morning visit to Fort Jesus, a 16th-century Portuguese fort and museum that bears testimony to the long European presence on the Swahili Coast. Built between 1593 and 1596, the fort's architecture reflects Renaissance military design. We'll also explore the ruins of Jumba la Mtwana, a 14th-century Swahili town whose name means "the large house of the slave," providing insight into the Indian Ocean slave trade. In the afternoon, we'll wander through Mombasa's atmospheric Old Town, with its narrow alleys and intricately carved doorways reflecting centuries of multicultural influence. (B/L/D)

Daily Itinerary *(cont'd)*

Day 10

Zanzibar

A flight to Zanzibar, the “Spice Island,” once the world’s largest producer of cloves and a key player in the Indian Ocean slave trade. Enjoy an evening lecture by Dr. Wynne-Jones on Zanzibar’s role in Indian Ocean trade networks. Overnight at Kisiwa House, Zanzibar for two nights. (B/ L/D)

Day 11

Stone Town, Persian Baths, Prison Island

Full day in Stone Town, another UNESCO World Heritage site. We’ll visit the former slave market and the Anglican Cathedral built on its site, a powerful reminder of Zanzibar’s history. We’ll explore the Old Fort, built by Omani Arabs in the 17th century, and the House of Wonders, a 19th-century sultan’s palace. Our “spice tour” will connect us to the trade that made Zanzibar famous. We’ll also visit the late 19th-century Hamamni Persian Baths. In the afternoon, we’ll take a boat trip to Prison Island to see giant tortoises and the old quarantine station. Dinner is on our own. (B/L)

Day 12

Flight to Dar es Salaam. Drive to Kilwa

Morning flight to Dar es Salaam, followed by a scenic drive to Kilwa. Dar es Salaam, whose name means “Haven of Peace” in Arabic, was founded in the 1860s by the Omani Sultan of Zanzibar. Evening at leisure with a lecture by Dr. Wynne-Jones on the rise and fall of Kilwa. Overnight at Kilwa Pakaya Hotel for three nights. (B/L/D)

Day 13

Kilwa Kisiwani Ruins

Enjoy the first of two full days exploring the ruins of Kilwa Kisiwani. Once described by Ibn Battuta as “one of the most beautiful and well-constructed cities in the world,” Kilwa controlled much of the gold trade with Sofala in present-day Mozambique. We’ll visit the Great Mosque, begun in the 11th century and substantially expanded in the 14th century, once the largest mosque in sub-Saharan Africa. After lunch, explore the vast palace complex known as Husuni Kubwa. Dr. Wynne-Jones will provide insights into the latest archaeological findings from this important site. (B/L/D)



Day 14

Songo Mnara Ruins

Today we continue our explorations of Kilwa Kisiwani, including the smaller mosques, the fort, and the extensive cemeteries. We’ll discuss Kilwa’s role in the wider Indian Ocean trade networks and its connections to the African interior. The day will conclude with a summary discussion led by Dr. Wynne-Jones on the significance of Kilwa in Swahili and world history. (B/L/D)

Daily Itinerary *(cont'd)*

Day 15

Transfer to Dar es Salaam

Return to Dar es Salaam, reflecting on our journey along the Swahili Coast. Evening at leisure. Farewell dinner where we'll discuss how our perceptions of East African history and culture have been transformed by our experiences. Overnight at Four Points by Sheraton, Dar es Salaam. (B/L/D)

Day 16

Depart Kenya

Transfer to Dar es Salaam International Airport for flights home, carrying with us a deeper understanding of the Swahili Coast's rich history and enduring cultural legacy. (B)

PLEASE NOTE: Occasionally, due to circumstances beyond our control, itinerary changes may occur. We appreciate your understanding and flexibility should this be necessary

Pre and Post Trip Extensions

Far Horizons offers pre or post extensions for many of our trips. We can also arrange extra nights at the arrival and departure hotel should you wish to arrive early or depart later. Please contact us for details.



Why Take This Tour?

See Five UNESCO World Heritage Sites:

Lamu Old Town;
Fort Jesus in Mombasa,
Stone Town in Zanzibar,
and Kilwa Kisiwani in
Southern Tanzania;
and Gedi Ruins

Visit Pate Island's 3 key archaeological sites:

Shanga (7th-15th C.),
Pate (10th C.), and
Siyu (18th-19th C.)

Explore Zanzibar's Stone Town including a cultural tour of the city and a spice tour featuring locally grown island spices

Stay in luxury hotels and resorts throughout the journey

Limited to 14 participants



Pricing

For current pricing, please visit farhorizons.com and navigate to our trip page.

Inclusions

Price based on double occupancy and includes:

- Internal flights during the trip (if applicable/unless otherwise noted)
- The accompaniment of your scholar throughout the entire trip
- Local English-speaking guide
- Hotel accommodations (3 or 4 stars; or best available based in the area)
- Ground transportation
- Airport transfers for arrivals and departures
- Most meals as noted in the itinerary
- Entry fees to all included sites and museums
- Gratuities to guides, drivers, and restaurant and hotel staff
- Coordination for any private presentations or tours

Trip prices are based on a minimum number of participants. If this minimum number is not met, trip prices are subject to change. Should the prices need to change, Far Horizons will reach out to registered guests to discuss directly.

Single Supplement

Should a roommate be requested and one not be available, the single supplement will be charged.

Exclusions

- International round trip airfare
- A separate donation check of \$150.00 per person to a designated donation project
- Passport or visa fees
- Required vaccines or tests
- Airport or departure taxes
- Alcoholic drinks, beverages or food not included on set menus
- Excess baggage charges
- Personal tips and hotel incidental expenses
- Laundry or other items of a personal nature

Donation Checks

As a tour company that benefits from the cultural and natural riches of our destinations, we have a policy of donating to the scientific and cultural sites and projects which we visit. This has created a bond between Far Horizons and the academic and local communities that has helped us establish an extensive list of lecturers and contacts in each of our destinations. We ask that each participant donate to the noteworthy project we designate. The donation amount is \$150.00 per person. Note that the donation is required as part of your registration for the trip and that it is non-refundable.

Exchange Rate Fluctuations

Prices are based on currency exchange rates keeping below a projected level. While it is unlikely, if the exchange rates should change substantially, Far Horizons reserves the right to charge an additional amount to the trip cost.

Registration

A deposit of \$1000 per person is required along with your registration & health forms, which will be linked in the email confirmation you receive once you pay your deposit on our booking platform. Final payment is due 120 days before departure. Prior to departure, you will be sent a reading list and a tour bulletin containing travel information.



Tour Information *(cont'd)*

Cancellation

Cancellations received in writing at least 120 days before departure will receive a refund less a \$500 per person administrative fee.

Cancellations received less than 120 days before the departure date will not receive a refund. If for any reason you are unable to complete the trip, Far Horizons will not reimburse any fees. Upon registering for the tour, the purchase of travel protection with both trip cancellation and emergency evacuation is strongly advised. Links to recommended insurance policies will be included in the email you receive confirming receipt of your deposit.

Expectations During Travel

This tour is designed for flexible, energetic people who like to be active, have a spirit of adventure and a positive attitude. We have designed this trip to be as comfortable as possible, while also aiming to visit some remote or unique sites that other companies do not attempt to include in their itineraries. There may be days where we have very long drives and the conditions of the roads may vary. Hotels and transportation in some remote areas may not be up to western standards. There may be times when no bellhops are available; please pack with the understanding that you need to be able to handle your own luggage at times. Sometimes we may be walking over uneven trails for a mile or more; hiking boots are strongly recommended. Not every meal will be haute cuisine and several lunches may be picnics or box lunches. By maintaining a flexible attitude we will soon be captivated by the beauty of the natural scenery, the hospitality of the local people, and the fascinating sites we will see. Your flexibility and patience will be appreciated.

Air Ticketing

International round trip flights are not included in the cost of the trip. If Far Horizons must change the trip dates or cancel the trip for any reason, Far Horizons is not responsible for any air ticket you may have purchased. Please send your complete air schedule as soon as you have it. NOTE: Please contact Far Horizons if you would like for us to handle your air ticketing.

Private Tours and Talks

The private tours of archaeological sites and talks by specialists are scheduled in advance and include a donation to each. Specialists working at these sites are excited about showing their work to interested enthusiasts. However, please be aware that there may be times when the director or a member of the staff may not be on site when our groups arrive due to other commitments.

Walking and Standing

Far Horizons expects all participants to be physically active and able to walk and climb independently throughout the full touring days. This includes walking over uneven terrain (uphill and downhill) for 2 miles or more at each site. You should expect to be on your feet for much of each day, averaging as much as 5 miles of walking per day. **As such, each participant should be able to walk unaided at a pace of 3 miles per hour for at least an hour at a time, and to stand unsupported for at least 60 minutes.** Bearing this in mind, we suggest that, if you have not already done so, you begin walking several miles every day, ideally including stairs and hills. If you have questions about your ability to keep up with the group or the strenuous nature of this trip, please contact the Far Horizons staff.



Travel Insurance

We strongly recommend that you consider purchasing travel insurance. Should illness or an unforeseen event force you to cancel your travel plans after your final payment or during your trip, it would be doubly unfortunate to incur a significant financial loss. Trip cancellation protection will enable you to be reimbursed for the loss of your payment if you are unable to travel for any of the covered reasons in the "Outline of Coverage" section, or should you have an accident or suffer from any medical conditions during the trip.

Far Horizons offers customized protection plans through Travel Insured International (a Crum & Forster Company) with the following benefits:

- Trip Cancellation and Trip Interruption for covered reasons
- Trip Delay
- Baggage Loss and Baggage Delay
- Emergency Medical Expenses and Emergency Medical Evacuation
- 24-Hour Accidental Death & Dismemberment
- 24-Hour Travel Assistance & Concierge Services
- Option to upgrade to 'Cancel for Any Reason (CFAR)

We recommend reviewing the language in detail so you are aware of specific parameters; Depending on the policy, to waive the Pre-Existing Medical Condition Exclusion or to upgrade to CFAR coverage, the plan must be purchased within 14 to 21 days of the initial trip deposit, full trip cost must be insured, and traveler is medically fit at time of plan purchase. Otherwise, coverage may be purchased at any time prior to departure.

To obtain a personalized quote and/or purchase a plan through Far Horizons/Travel Insured International, simply click [HERE](#). For specific questions regarding the Worldwide Protector Plan, please contact Travel Insured International's Customer Care Center at 1-800-243-3174 or by email at customercare@travelinsured.com, and refer to Far Horizons' account number: 54070.

Itinerary Changes

Changes in our itinerary, accommodations, and transportation schedules may occur. While we are committed to keeping as close to the published details as possible, sometimes it is simply not possible. Weather events, government affairs, or other factors out of our control sometimes come into play. A good book to read as well as patience, flexible attitude, and a sense of humor are essential.



A wide-angle photograph of a beach scene. In the foreground, a camel is lying down on the white sand, facing right. It has a red and white striped cloth draped over its back. In the background, three more camels are standing in a line, facing right. A person is standing near the first camel. The beach is white, and the ocean is a vibrant blue. The sky is clear and blue.

Meet Your Study Leader...

Dr. Stephanie Wynne - Jones

Stephanie Wynne-Jones is a specialist in the archaeology of eastern Africa, particularly the Swahili coast. She directed excavations at sites across Kenya, Tanzania and Mozambique. Her Ph.D. from the University of Cambridge was based on work around Kilwa in southern Tanzania.

She is a [Professor of African Archaeology](#) at the University of York, where she teaches on all aspects of African archaeology and heritage. She also teaches in the Centre for Medieval Studies, exploring the Global Middle Ages and Islamic worlds.

She has published widely on all aspects of the Swahili coast and her work there, including books on [The Swahili World](#) and [A Material Culture](#).

Professor Wynne-Jones' knowledge of the area and passion for the subject make her an ideal trip leader, exploring sites, many of which she has excavated herself.





Why Travel with Far Horizons?

With over forty years of experience, and an 85% customer return rate, we have stood the test of time. Remind yourself what makes Far Horizons so unique.

Scholar Led Tours

✦ Every tour is led by a well-respected PhD scholar with expertise in the subject & regions we visit.

Trusted Partnerships

✦ Trusted Partnerships: Every tour is led by a well-respected PhD scholar with expertise in the subject & regions we visit.

Behind the Scenes Access

✦ Our groups have private access to closed areas and on-site specialists.

Unique Trips

✦ Our itineraries are designed to showcase sites that are off-the-beaten path; we explore places that many travelers never see.

Personalized Service

✦ We love knowing our guests and helping with the decision process. We are here to assist you.

Small Groups

✦ Our tours have a maximum of 14 travelers. So you can trust that you will have a boutique experience every time.



READY TO TRAVEL TO KENYA? SWAHILI COAST

WITH DR STEPHANIE WYNNE - JONES

Email with Questions

journeys@farhorizons.com

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